The

Non-Subscribing Presbyterian

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Notes of the Month.

DESPITE the fact that the war is still with us, and the end is not yet, a much more hopeful spirit is abroad. It is strikingly evinced in the letters and conversation of our soldiers at the Front. How it is to be accounted for we do not exactly know. Perhaps it is because of the fact that "hope springs eternal in the human breast," and that the near approach of a season of better and brighter weather is making itself felt. But to whatever cause it is responsible, we rejoice in the fact. It is well that we at home should put a cheerful courage on, and seek by every means in our power, not only to be cheerful, but to radiate the same spirit. It is in times of general gloom and depression that professing Christians have an opportunity of manifesting their faith. To come out strong then, is to be true to the spirit of Christianity, which began with the proclamation of good tidings, and which, through the medium of the greatest of the Apostles, could urge: "Rejoice in the Lord alway, and again I say, rejoice." Our services should harmonise with that Christian note. We shall not administer comfort and consolation by making the offices of the church doleful. Our people must feel that the Sunday ministrations are able to lift the worshippers to a higher plane of thought and feeling, on which joy in the Lord is a reality and an inspiration. Let us succeed in that, and our people will demonstrate their need of the Church by their devoted attendance at its services.

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Last month there was dedicated in Westminster Abbey a memorial tablet which will for many years be an object of interest to all who appreciate practical Christianity. The late Canon S. A. Barnett, founder and Warden of Toynbee Hall—the first University Settlement—was a distinguished member of the Church of England, but in his self-sacrificing labours wielded an influence beyond the bounds of any particular community. Toynbee Hall, which is situated in Whitechapel, London, commemorated the devoted endeavours and striking personality of Arnold Toynbee. After a brilliant career at Balliol College, Oxford, Toynbee proceeded to put into practice a long-cherished project. As one biographer records: "Believing that the poor could only be adequately helped by those who had lived amongst them, he himself took up residence in Whitechapel." There, after his death in 1883, when still in his thirty-first year, his friends and admirers sought

to perpetuate his influence and continue his work. Accordingly, in the year 1885, Toynbee Hall was founded, and Canon Barnett was summoned from another sphere of labour, to make his new work rich in blessing for the East End of London. With the constant support and aid of his devoted wife, and the band of workers they inspired with their enthusiasm for humanity, he laboured for about thirty years, his fertile mind constantly projecting new means of doing the best Christian work. Toynbee Hall gave a strong impulse to similar efforts elsewhere, and University Settlements sprang up in different English cities. Such an one, for example, was the Manchester University Settlement, which has for many years done splendid work in Ancoats. Little wonder that those who so well knew the Christian services of which Canon Barnett was the source and inspiration, should desire to commemorate his memory. When the memorial tablet was recently dedicated in Westminster Abbey, there were present as deeply interested and sympathetic hearers of Deane Ryle's address, distinguished members of different churches, such as Lord Crewe, Lord Bryce, Dr. Clifford, Lord Courtney, Lord Burnham, the Bishop of Hereford, and Mr. St. George Heath (the present Warden of Toynbee Hall). Sir George Frampton, R.A., designed the tablet. The inscription was suggested by Canon Barnett's friends, and felicitously catches the spirit of the man it commemorates: "Believing that we are all members one of another, he laboured unceasingly to unite men in the service of God, and by his counsel and example inspired many to seek for themselves and for the nation the things that are eternal." On the left of the tablet is the figure of a sower, with the words: "Fear not to sow because of the birds."

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As if to emphasise the equality of the sexes in the matter of good works, a similar ceremony to that we have recorded above was performed a little later in St. Paul's Cathedral, to commemorate the work of that devoted woman, Florence Nightingale. The tablet, which is to record for future generations her noble labours, was unveiled in the crypt of the Cathedral by the Queen. Many of us are familiar with the inscription which so strikingly records in St. Paul's the labours of Sir Christopher Wren, the architect of that magnificent Cathedral. It is inscribed on a tablet over the inner north doorway of the Cathedral, and consists of these pregnant words: "Si momentum requiris, circumspice"—(If you seek after a monument, look around). But in another, and even wider sense, the same inscription could be used of Florence Nightingale and her fruitful activities. While it is fitting to dedicate a tablet to her memory in St. Paul's, we need to look around to find her real memorial. It is to be found in this terrible war time in the thousand and one agencies which have for their object the alleviation of the sufferings of the sick and the wounded. The bands of devoted women who are engaged in hospital work, the companies of men who have gone forth under the auspices of the Red Cross Societies, the improved and more humane methods of dealing with the wounded by ambulance or in hospital—all these are in a sense the best and most abiding memorial of what she did and planned for suffering humanity. May her memory ever be perpetuated by self-sacrifice and Christian sympathy, for while there is special need of these now, alas! there will never come a time when we can dispense with their aid. Their continual and increasing exercise constitutes the chief hope of mankind, and will alone usher in God's kingdom on earth.

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"Interpreter," who writes a weekly article for the "Belfast News Letter," published an excellent contribution on February 19th, entitled "The Failure of the Church." He says:—"Why is it that there is so much Christianity outside the Church? Such a question is sometimes met by a flat denial. Outside that Society which was instituted by Christ there can be no such thing as Christianity. But this, of course, is simply what is known as a

'Begging of the question.' It generally means a confusion of the Faith of Christ with the various forms and organisations in which that Faith has had its manifestations. An arbitrary circle is drawn according to certain preconceptions, and those not included in its limits are regarded as outside Christianity itself, to whom the name Christian cannot be applied. Such arrogant exclusiveness of the narrow Churchman, or the latter-day 'Saint' was from the beginning of Christianity foreseen and denounced by its Founder Himself: 'Ye know not of what spirit ye are of.' So we again return to the persistent question: 'Why is it that there is so much Christianity outside the Church?'—the word 'Church' here standing for Christianity in its organised form; what is known as institutional religion. We have in mind that class, not without some culture and education, not certainly devoid of personal religion, neither gross materialists nor hard mammon worshippers, who are as far distant from professed Atheism as they are from convinced Churchmanship. Men, and women, though less often, whom we know and respect, for whom life is neither a game nor a banquet, unselfish, kindly, loyal, they do not wear their hearts upon their sleeves, nor profane the spiritual sanctities of life with blatant self-assertion or unctuous phraseology. Surely not without the fruits of the spirit, if peace, goodness, temperance are rightly reckoned among these. As they thus, to the exceeding loss of the Church, stand aside from its organisation, let us try to find their convictions, their outlook on the world.

A man's life, they would say, is more important than his religion. And in this there would, I presume, be general agreement; religion in their sense being understood as church attendance and the holding of certain views. All this, they say, belongs to an external domain, where habit and convention count for more than reality. Again we agree. This is too frequently the case. We have all known persons religious, indeed, from this point of view, yet with no commercial integrity, no sense of honour, selfish as regards home or children, unequal to the strain of friendship. Yet these are, indeed, the things that matter; this is to play the game of life according to the rules. That men and women with such high ideals are found outside the Church's walls proves something seriously wrong either in organised Christianity or in their conception of it. Our vanishing Sundays and our declining congregations do certainly to some extent prove this, though we dare not go on to assert that personal religion is no longer a need and a possession of our common humanity. A man's life—the way he lives from day to day—is of vastly greater importance than his habit of church attendance, or his holding of certain religious opinions. But, then, may not Church services and religious doctrines possess some inner power to help a man in living the good life?"

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"If some stand outside the Churches because they cannot honestly use the outworn language in which the Churches so unwisely persevere, are they altogether without excuse?

In many other matters the thoughts and outlook of a large and growing class differ from those which find expression in the Church. I do not at all mean that such are always or necessarily right. What we are trying to find is their point of view. Having found this, then, we go on to ask are they right or is the Church right? Is there anything in these thoughts of theirs which must rightly exclude them from organised Christianity? Is the Church concerned with their difficulties and needs, prepared to help them; or is she satisfied to go complacently on her way, ministering to those alone who can unquestioning accept her teaching and her claims? She stands at the cross roads to-day, and on her answer depend her usefulness, her chance of continuance as a power that makes for righteousness, a national spiritual asset of incalculable import.

The class of which we have been thinking can be labelled neither under the head of religious orthodoxy nor under that of spiritual indifference. They must possess personal religion of

some value and reality, if it is still true, as the Master taught, that the tree is to be judged by its fruits. Yet for themselves their aloofness proves that Church attendance and Church teaching as generally given, afford to them no spiritual help or light. Such reflect the unsettlement of this traditional age. Drawn to the Church by old associations, by the charm, perhaps of ancient buildings, by the quiet reverence of worship; feeling that for the baptism of their children, for the marriage of a daughter, for the last solemn rites of all, there is nowhere else that they can turn; yet withal so conscious of modern influences that they can never feel as though they entirely belong there where the questions which perplex them never seem to be fairly faced. The riddle of this painful universe for them remains unsolved through the passing years.

Is there, then, any possibility of their finding once again that Christianity has still for them a message worth their hearing? They are not found in our churches on Sundays. Their absence stirs to "furious thinking" the parish minister who knows and values their worth in every-day life. Are these things real, important, essential that he himself is concerned with in the services of Sunday? Yet if this be so, why do some remain outside whose worth in character and knowledge he has learned to value. The men who are educating his children, curing his bodily ailments, conducting large businesses, teaching him in the Press—he feels that if these men really believed that they were depriving themselves of something valuable, essential, they would not act so foolishly as to remain outside, for this would be quite unlike their action in other matters. What, then, is wrong? Such are not irreligious, yet is not Christianity the highest form of religion? Is there possibly misunderstanding on both sides as to what Christianity really is?"

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It is a hopeful sign to see an article of this kind published in one of our daily newspapers. Such papers are conducted as commercial enterprises. They reflect public opinion. The appearance of this contribution shows that there exists to-day a feeling among the general public which was absent a few years ago. It also shows that a large number of people want a lead in religious matters. They feel that something is wrong, but they are unable to think out for themselves an alternative course. "Interpreter" himself is in this position, or perhaps he prefers to feel his way by suggesting rather than by deliberately pointing out the direction. We, as a denomination, have long seen the difficulty, and have endeavoured to show the way out of it. That way lies in placing the emphasis on the life and teaching of Jesus rather than on doctrine and dogma. Three centuries ago the old Scottish Confession of Knox said that men should look to that "quhilk Christ Jesus himselfe did and commanded to be done." In more recent times the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church in its Constitution has advocated "obedience to the Commandments which Christ himself has laid down" as the supreme matter in Christianity. Therein lies the solution of the problem. The difficulty is to get the Churches to unite in bringing this emphatically before the mass of the people.

* *

A Jesuit priest has recently attacked Protestantism in a sermon in Dublin. As reported in the "Northern Whig" of February 22nd, he calls Protestants "hypocritical murderers of souls." He points to the immorality of Ulster as compared with the morality of Connaught, and exclaims: "No wonder Luther in his old age wrote that if he had seen the scandal that would come he would never have preached "the Reformation," for nothing had resulted from it but that decency and morality had disappeared from Europe."

* *

We might, in reply, ask him to explain the moral condition of such a Catholic country as Austria; but our business is not to bandy words, but to face facts. Statistics show that the moral condition of Ulster and of other Protestant countries might be much improved. Let all Protestant Churches set to work

to bring about that improvement. Let them dwell upon the teaching of Christ, and leave all else in the background, and the results will soon show as new generations arise. This is not a simple matter. It will necessitate revision of Creed, and Confession, and Catechism; but even before that consummation is reached, much good may be done by individual teachers and preachers placing the example and precepts of Jesus before their people in the boldest possible relief.

MORTALITY AND THE GRAVE.

By Rev. Eustace Thompson.

For we must needs die.—II Sam. xiv. 14.

What a melancholy prospect is the grave! For we must needs die, and are as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again. And mortality is common to us all. The proper state of a man is to be erect. If he stumble and fall prone he may get to his feet again. A disease or a stroke of violence may lay him low, yet from these he may recover; but if he be smitten by death, he will not rise again in this land of the living. If he were of no more value to his fellow men than is the flowering plant which is trodden down by the beast of the field or one of the flock of birds that in the mid-flight of their migration fall to the ground at the foot of a lighthouse, or any living creature which falls a prey to another more powerful than itself, his mortality could not seem free from sadness to anyone who pondered it. Even when one, whose days have been many and good—happy for himself and appreciated by all who knew him—passes away at last in merciful freedom from pain, and easily, with fading consciousness, we feel it is a mournful office to lay his body in the place of its last, long sleep. Much more is it grievous to witness the unexpected departure of a child who has won the admiration and affection of family and friends, and filled them with hopes of future excellence—full of wonder and delight at the discovery of the contents of the earth, glad and thankful to be living, and looking eagerly to the attractive purview of possibilities in store. Sadder still, the cutting off of one in the enjoyment of vigour, or in the fruitful period of full maturity, who is not merely precious to friends and acquaintance by reason of graces, but necessary to them because of performances, as a very limb of their life.

To ward off death, and in the moment of sudden menace, to escape it, is the instinctive endeavour of all animated nature. The desire to continue living is as inseparable from life as the propensity to continue burning is inseparable from flame. If an aged person becomes oppressed by feebleness or impotence, and no longer desires to continue living, it is rather that he is resigned to mortality and prepared to die, than that he has no longer a wish for life.

If it were true that after death there is no resurrection of an immortal part of us from the mortal remains, we should be forced to the conclusion that, apart from any life-purpose we may invent for ourselves, the only purpose for which life has been given is the continuance of our species. And if it can be argued that any one of us is absolutely of no account towards the fulfilment of that purpose, that is only as one of any other kind of thing made for a set purpose may nevertheless, by accident or by force of circumstances, fail to fulfil its normal destiny. We should have small reason to wonder at the suggested purpose of human life if it were not solitary. For we ourselves breed cattle, and grow many kinds of plants, and one purpose we have in so doing is to preserve the supply of seed necessary for the continuance of the several species. But that purpose is not solitary: we use a major part of the crops and stock we raise for our own sustenance. It is surely impossible to believe that there is not a life invisible beyond the life visible to our mortal eyes, in which a further purpose for the life we shall have lived here shall be revealed to us. There are at least two reasons for the faith in a resurrection to another life. First, if it is a purpose of God that we

live in order to maintain the continuance of the humanity to which we belong, it is certain that those of us who take the greatest pains to discharge that purpose as efficiently as possible, rather than to seek first for happiness for themselves, are in general rewarded the most highly by dying full of many days, or at all events by a proportionate fulness of contentment in the days they have, whether many or few. Secondly, it is equally true that those who believe in a life invisible are in general the most willing and zealous to perform that same function of ministering to the life and happiness of their companions, and of humanity at large. Such is the reason for the faith that is in us, that he who loses his life, that is to say, who spends it upon others rather than upon himself, shall keep it unto life eternal.

"FREE CATHOLIC."

By ULLIN.

"I HAVE been in all the four quarters of the globe, and in America!" This was a favourite form of opening an address which a certain teetotal lecturer used, whose circuit lay principally in the county of Sir Wilfred Lawson. Finally the question was put to him: "Was ta iver at Greysouthen?" "No," he replied. "Than thou's been nae spot," was the rejoinder. He protested too much, and overshot the mark, and failed to convince his audience that his words had the weight of a man of travel and of wide experience of the world.

By universal testimony travel is admitted to be one of the best means of expanding the mind, for widening the sympathies, for obtaining other points of view in world politics than that of one's own nationality. Since all have not the means and opportunity of emulating Mark Twain's "Innocents Abroad," or seeing the world to the extent of our teetotal friend, still much may be done mentally at this time of war maps and war news. Geographical information is in the air, on the tram, in the train, at the street corner, and in the Unitarian Depository. Far-away places, scarcely heard of before, including the Garden of Eden, are talked of with clearer ideas than ever before, as to where these localities are. From this it is an easy step to get on to the subject of universal religion—and "Catholic" means "universal"—since religion is the study of human nature, and countries cannot be thought of apart from their inhabitants. "The proper study of mankind is man." Comparatively few now-a-days would speak of Indians as "niggers," or confuse "Buddhism" with "Hinduism," or "Islam" with "Fire Worshippers." Most people know that the State Church of Russia is not under the Pope of Rome, although incense is used and candles burned. George Birmingham states that an Irish Protestant boy, when he repeats the creed, cannot understand for the life of him, why he has to say he believes in the Holy Catholic Church.

"It's a long way to Tipperary," and, like the minister at the Free Kirk Assembly in Edinburgh, the writer is inclined to say, "Faither we thank Thee we're no faur frae hame," although the patient reader may think that he has already travelled right round the globe and the continent of America before getting to the point.

Lately a small magazine has been circulated among our churches bearing the title *Free Catholic* and some of us here in Ulster are as puzzled as the Protestant laddie. The title of *this* magazine is "Non Subscribing Presbyterian," and doesn't that mean "Free Catholic" in the truest sense of the words? Read the constitution of our Church, and see that we are "free" from all shackles of creed, and "catholic" in a wide tolerance which perceives unity in the midst of diversity.

The celebrated popular Methodist preacher, Peter Mackenzie, was watching the building of a new Congregational church at Dronfield. A Catholic priest came by and asked Peter "What place is that?" "Independent chapel," replied Peter. "Independent, independent of what?" "Independent of Pope and the Devil," was Peter's

prompt answer. I take it that we are all agreed on the type of Catholicism that is free of Pope and the Devil. Is that the type, however, advocated in the *Free Catholic* magazine, by the Rev. J. M. Lloyd Thomas. "I hae ma doots." Dr. Orchard, lately a Presbyterian divine, has turned a famous stronghold of sturdy Nonconformity—The King's Weigh House—into something like a Catholic chapel. He has a Catholic altar, and arrays himself in priests' robes, and conducts the service on his knees, with his back to the congregation. He is a "Free Catholic." He sees no future for the Free Churches; they are on their way to extinction, and Catholicism is neither understood nor appreciated as it should be. This new magazine seems to be on the same tack, and if Mr. Lloyd Thomas and his supporters have their way, not much is going to be heard of Unitarianism in the future. Then, candidly, the use of the word "catholic" in this connection is more restricted than when it is taken to be synonymous with "universal." Howbeit, in what is written there is much that is well worth study, perhaps a prelude to forms which the future has in store.

A strong appeal is made while striving to attain to unity, and in that sense to be a Christian Catholic, to also freely "examine past formulations, so that he may help humbly and modestly, the revision, re-statement, and reconstruction of doctrine in the light of every established discovery in the realm of critical thought." So far Unitarians need have no quarrel with such a purpose, for that is what they have been doing for centuries. But in this particular instance, what do "past formulations" mean to the Free Catholic of the type set forth in this magazine? The answer is indicated on the last page in a eulogy on the ceremonial of the Greek Church, and a comparison made with its claims and those of Rome, which are described as "absurd." Maurice Baring is quoted as giving countenance to this contrast between the Greek and Roman Churches: "It holds the faithful by the blessing of the Sacraments, by the majesty of an immemorial tradition, the glory of a mystical and liturgical Church, whose ritual and liturgy is one of inexpressible richness, depth, and beauty." And the inference is to try to get a Free Catholic Church with a liturgy and ritual approaching this magnificence. But, unfortunately for the author of the article, Maurice Baring himself is now a Roman Catholic.

A very learned Roman Catholic priest, who had been in close touch with some of the higher ecclesiastics in England, including Cardinal Manning, gave the present writer an insight into the folly and weakness of all imitations of Catholic ceremonial. Everything centres on the Mass. Ordination, with the Catholic is not a mere succession of preaching as it is with the Protestant; but the passing on of the gift of the mystic power of transubstantiation. The whole fabric of the hierarchy is built upon this. The High Church Party among Episcopalians also holds a similar theory, the validity of orders being entirely independent of the personal opinion of bishops. The Rev. Vernon Herford has, in the writer's opinion, hit the mark more successfully than the advocates of this particular brand of "Free Catholicism." Mr. Herford went to the East, to the ancient Nestorian Church, whose orders are recognised, he says, by Roman Catholics as equally valid with their own, and he received ordination as deacon, then as priest, finally being consecrated "Bishop of Mercia." with authority to extend the church in England. He calls his Church the "Catholic Evangelical." If you are going to do the thing at all, do it properly, and surely in this Bishop Herford is more consistent than the Rev. J. M. Lloyd Thomas and his supporters.

The whole subject is one of great interest, and it is only right that we should learn all we can about this new movement which is rising in our midst. No doubt it has its rightful place along with other aspects of Christian teaching. Human temperaments vary, and might roughly be classed as following three great paths—Action, Devotion, Knowledge. The first would include

those who find their religion in work. The second, those who find their expression in Beauty, Poetry, Art, Ritual. The third, those who prize clear thinking and seek to know. "Whatever the Path, even on that Path do I find them," says an old scripture.

A WORD TO SUBSCRIBING PRESBYTERIANS

By Presbyter.

Sharing with you the old tradition of Presbyterianism, anything which touches the honour and dignity of Presbyterianism equally affects us as it does you. When the insult directed against Presbyterianism by the Kikuyu incident was repudiated by the majority of Episcopalians, we were glad that breach between two great Churches of the Reformation was not to be widened, but expressions of fraternal good feeling tended to heal it. We remember how the question of the validity of orders between the two Churches—Presbyterian and Episcopalian—in the early days of the Reformation, scarcely existed; how a Presbyterian minister, without any further ordination was appointed directly to a Bishopric in England, as a minister of the Reformed Church. We do not forget further, that in recent history three Archbishops have come to the Church of England from the ranks of Presbyterianism, and in good old Presbyterian diction, "they have been mindful of the rock whence they were hewn, and the hole of the pit whence they were digged." The State Church of Scotland is Presbyterian, and in Scotland the King himself is a Presbyterian. He is the temporal head of the Church of Scotland, and his representative, the Lord High Commissioner, attends the General Assembly, and in the King's name opens and closes the proceedings. The first act of the King on ascending to the throne is to take an oath to protect the rights of the Church of Scotland as by law established. Considering that in every way Presbyterianism is on an equality with Episcopacy; that if in England Presbyterians are Dissenters, in Scotland Episcopalians are Dissenters, it was a matter of gratification to us that the Senior Presbyterian Chaplain should, though rather late in the day, have his right to the rank of Honorary Major-General equally recognised with that of the leading Anglican Chaplain, Bishop Gwynn.

The recent command, however, issued by Bishop Gwynn to all Anglican soldiers, forbidding them to worship with Presbyterians unless the service is conducted by a minister in Anglican orders, deserves to be deeply resented by Protestants the world over.

The whole history of Protestantism has meant the fight against a Church which attempted to lord it over all other Churches, and to make ineffective the arrogance and impudent assumption of a Church setting up any such claims. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty;" and union, and not separation, is the mark of the presence of the ensouling life.

Any motive that would prompt intolerance and religious bigotry in the great, supreme moments of the battlefield can only be of anti-Christ, and not of the Good Shepherd who said: "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold, them also I must bring, and they shall be one fold and one shepherd." That same Good Shepherd sternly rebuked the disciples who drove the children away from Him, and we are assured that any action of intolerance and exclusiveness that would separate instead of binding heart to heart, would have no sanction from Him; that His hand would not be extended in blessing over it.

"The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God," however, and anger and resentment are disintegrating forces; love, and tolerance, and brotherhood build up the Church of God, and realising this, we have nothing but the warmest and most fraternal feelings to you, our Subscribing brethren, differing as we do from you in opinion as to the value of those things to which we cannot subscribe, but which you consider it your duty to solemnly pledge yourselves to

support. Occasionally our ministers have occupied your pulpits, and your ministers have occupied ours, and we look for a time when such exchange will be more frequent in the future than in the past. We are prepared to abide by the stand we have taken on a Scriptural basis, and our fathers of the Reformation, at the first, were prepared to do likewise. When that principle was departed from, the sundering of the Reformed Church took place. We can value and appreciate much in the standards of faith to which both you and our Episcopalian friends subscribe, and all the more so because our minds are free, and we are eager to recognise truth from whatever quarter or under whatever form it may come. We ask no subscription to any creed or article of faith from any minister or member of our Church. Let each build for himself, and share freely with others his superstructure on the simple foundation of faith, once delivered: "One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and in all, and through all."

Memorial Notices.

MISS ELMA STERLING BELL, Banbridge.

As briefly reported in the last issue of this paper, the death occurred on 14th January of Elma Sterling Bell, the beloved and youngest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Bell, Ballydown, Banbridge. She suffered a long illness, which at the last proved very painful, but she bore it all with great patience and fortitude. Of a gentle disposition, keen intelligence, and brightness of character, her future seemed full of promise and noble possibilities, but she was cut down while life was young and her day but begun. She will be sadly missed, not only in the home, but also in the Church, of which she was a faithful member and worker while health and strength permitted. In the Sunday School she was very active, and for a period filled the office of pianist. The death of the young is an occurrence which brings sorrow to all hearts. Miss Bell had made her plans and dreamed her dreams of a future of usefulness and happiness, but her plans were defeated and her cherished ideals she was not allowed to realise on earth. Life is full of mystery, and disappointment lies across our path oftentimes. We cannot fathom the mystery, nor perceive the meaning behind the disappointment, but we believe there is a meaning and a Divine will behind every incident in our life.

May those whose home has been darkened by the death of our young friend find comfort in this—that she did not live in vain. Her gentle disposition, her charitable nature, her cheerful and kindly smile have left a sweet memory that will live in the hearts of her friends. No kind thought she uttered will die—her little deeds and gifts of kindness will not be forgotten. The love and care bestowed on her in her last months on earth have made the home circle nobler and richer in those Christ-like qualities, which rust can never corrupt, nor thieves break through and steal.

May those who mourn her death be blessed even in their sorrow, and may they have strength to wait patiently until the day of immortality shall dawn and the mystery be solved, and the shadows flee away: may the faith of the poet be theirs also—that

> "There is no death, what seems so is transition:
> This life of mortal breath
> Is but a suburb of the life elysian,
> Whose portal we call death.
>
> She is not dead, the child of our affection—
> But gone unto that school
> Where she no longer needs our poor protection,
> And Christ himself doth rule."

MR. H. D. TODD, Comber.

Our Comber congregation, and indeed the entire inhabitants of the district were deeply moved by the unexpected and sudden death of Mr. Hugh David Todd, which occurred on the 9th ult. Although somewhat unwell for a little while, deceased had been going about his ordinary duties up till a few days

before his decease, and, being a young and active man, his death was altogether unlooked for. The deceased's family, which belongs to Comber, is well known and highly respected. The only son of the late Mr. David Todd (a life-long member and earnest supporter of our Comber Congregation), and descended on both sides from families who have always been loyal members of our body, he took a deep and active interest in the affairs of his church. In addition to being a member of Committee, he was treasurer of the Benevolent, Incidental and Sunday School Funds. The satisfactory manner in which he kept these accounts was characteristic of the efficiency and thoroughness with which he conducted all his affairs. He will be sadly missed by his fellow members, and his death leaves a void which will indeed be difficult to fill. Thoroughly straightforward in business, he was recognised as being highly conscientious in all his dealings, and, being of a kindly disposition, was a great favourite with all who knew him. Of a bright and cheery nature, he was a welcome guest in social circles, while to those privileged to enjoy his intimate friendship, he invariably proved himself an ideal host.

The funeral, which was large and representative, testified to the esteem and regard with which he was held by all classes. The Rev. Mr. Dunbar, Sen., officiated at the graveside. The deceased leaves a widow and four children, and a mother and sisters, who have the sincere sympathy of the entire community.

BY THE WAY.

I AM astonished to find that my harmless little story about the Clydebank worker's wife and the £120 piano has caused much annoyance in some quarters. To those who object to the story as a fact, I can only say that I had it on very good authority. To those who object to it is as an unwarranted censure of the wage-earning classes, I must say that so far from feeling censorious, I was filled with admiration at the aristocratic spirit of the woman who wanted the best piano for her daughters to "strum on."

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Personally, I think there is nothing to choose between the different classes in the matter of economy. There is far too much thoughtless extravagance everywhere. By way of a set-off to the piano story, I reproduce an advertisement taken from *The Morning Post* of 3rd February:— FOOTMAN, Under Butler, WANTED; must be over 20; ineligible, and trained in good service; *two in family, nine indoor servants,* including boy; country all the year.

* *

Nine indoor servants to wait on two people do not suggest that spirit of economy so necessary for our country's success. The only thing is for the Government to take our money away from us, either in new taxes or a forced loan, if it is to get a minimum expenditure all round. But I fear the Government also needs a few lessons in economy

* *

Certainly the Government has shown an almost feverish desire to economise in certain directions. Everything that makes merely for the improved health and intelligence of the community ought, in the opinion of many of our economical officials, to be willingly sacrificed. Education grants must be diminished, public health expenditure restricted, research work checked and museums closed. Could anything be more short-sighted? A mere trifle would be saved, and irreparable harm would be done. Why does not the public encourage the Government to work for economy in the right directions? Millions are being spent on horse-racing, drink, amusements and other things, all of which every true patriot ought to be willing, temporarily at least, to do without.

* *

In his brilliant little speech moving the address to His Majesty, Mr. Ian Macpherson gave an excellent illustration of an inconclusive peace. "He recalled the fact that after the Gunpowder Plot, the Lord Chamberlain of the day reported that he had examined

the vaults of the Parliament House and found 25 barrels of gunpowder. He removed ten of them, and said he hoped the other fifteen would do no harm."

* *

Those who truly desire peace know that it is impossible until German militarism is crushed. It is impossible also, until we crush in our hearts any false resolves that may be lurking there to make our country more militaristic in the future. To crush militarism in Germany whilst encouraging it amongst ourselves is like leaving the fifteen barrels of gunpowder and hoping they will do no harm.

* *

The ruthless barbarity of the Germans has caused them to be called the modern Huns. How far there is any definite racial evidence for the identification of the Germans with the Huns it is hard to say, but it is interesting to note that the battle of Chalons (451), in which the ancient Huns were defeated, was fought between the Seine and the Marne, *on the same ground on which the modern Huns were defeated in September*, 1914. The defeat of Attila and his Huns almost certainly prevented the overthrow of civilization and Christianity. The defeat of the Germans on the same ground will, I am convinced, prove to have been the decisive event of this war, and thus to have saved our modern civilisation and Christianity from overthrow. History repeats itself!

* *

The increased employment of women is proving on the whole a great success. Still, the *Manchester Guardian* publishes an amusing complaint from a youthful bank clerk:—"I don't mind getting only £20 a year, even though the new girl they've just shoved in gets £50, and she's only my age. I don't mind. her eating chewing gum all the time. But I do think it's a bit thick when the manager and myself have to work a couple of hours overtime every night to cover up her mistakes, while she always goes off to the minute."

* *

Lest it be thought that I quote this in an *ex parte* spirit, I hasten to repeat the old lady's remark in the tramcar on which was employed a girl conductor:—"Isn't it a delightful change," she asked, "to have the tickets proffered instead of—er—so to speak—having them thrust at one?"

VIATOR.

Reports.

Unity Guild.—In these days, when Picture Houses are so much the fashion, and people have grown so accustomed to the use of the lantern in illustrating a lecture, it requires either a very interesting subject or a first rate lecturer to hold the interest without such aid. The Rev. E. Savell Hicks's lecture to the Unity Guild on 16th February was illustrated in this way, but the impression left on the mind of the writer was that the audience would have been abundantly satisfied even without this additional advantage. The lecture was reminiscent of a happy holiday spent among the lakes of northern Italy, and was delivered in familiar style and sparkling good humour. An hour and a half slipped all too quickly away as we were conducted through the Alps on this memorable tour, which terminated with the outbreak of war. The Guild is much indebted to Mr. Hicks both for the excellence of the address and for having come up from Dublin specially to deliver it. The next meeting takes the form of a concert. An excellent programme is being arranged, the following friends having kindly consented to take part:—Miss Ellie Duff, Mrs. Samuel M'Crum, Miss Jessie B. Smith, Mr. T. Corlett, Mr. J. A. Laird, Miss Munster, Miss Gibson, Mr. Fred Clarke. The concert will be held in Rosemary Hall, Elmwood Avenue, on Wednesday, the 15th March.

* *

Banbridge.—LITERARY GUILD.—We are delighted to see the lively interest taken by our members in the above Guild, which was opened in September last, under the Presidency of Rev. J. G. Davies. The Guild is exceedingly instructive, and brings our young

people into the open; it encourages them to become good speakers and thinkers, and to search after knowledge, which in the present age is of great assistance to them, especially to those commencing life's journey. We are glad to note how the young folk enter into the debates with such zest and continue the discussions with the skill of Parliamentarians. The following subjects have been discussed at the meetings:—"Unitarianism after the War," "Should Bachelors be Taxed?" "Michael Servetus," "Women and the War," "Theophilus Lindsay," "Dr. Joseph Priestly," "My Experiences before and after Enlisting," "Thomas Emlyn."

SEWING GUILD.—A Sewing Guild also meets fortnightly, and a parcel of socks for the soldiers, mufflers, and linen bags, etc., has been forwarded to the "Inquirer" Belgian Hospital Fund. Every six weeks a social is held, the members contributing to the programme, and so far they have been enjoyable and helpful. A special feature of the last entertainment was the staging and production by the members of a sketch, entitled: "An Interrupted Proposal." The attendances at both Literary, Sewing, and Social nights has, up to the present, been very good. The Treasurer is Miss Annie Shields. The Secretary, Mr. Joseph M'Keown, having joined the R.H.A., Mr. William James Radclifte was appointed to the office.

On 7th January last the annual "Christmas Tree" entertainment was held in the Dunbar Memorial School. There was a good attendance of children, young people, and their parents and friends. After tea was dispensed with, the prizes for good attendance at the Sunday School were presented by Miss E. M'Caw, amid loud applause. Each member of the audience received a memento of the occasion in the shape of toys, which decorated the Christmas Tree. A number of games were then got up, which were heartily enjoyed, and the singing of "Auld Lang Syne," which brought this very happy and enjoyable evening to a close, came too soon.

Belfast: First Congregation.—The organisers and helpers who arranged the Bridge and Whist Drive which constituted the February effort in aid of St. Dunstan's Hostel, deserve great praise for so successfully managing the entertainment. About 250 players were present, and at least £100 will be forwarded to the Hostel as the result. The Lady Mayoress kindly distributed the prizes at the close of play. This is not the first time that she has recognised the good work which is being done, by her presence at this series of entertainments. * *

Cairncastle Old Meeting-house.—The Annual Meeting of the congregation, which is always very much enjoyed, was held in the school-room on Thursday evening, January 20th. The room was nicely decorated with ivy and ferns, and with bright curtains on the windows, and large Chinese lanterns hanging from the beams, it looked lovely. After a hearty tea the Minister took the chair, and the Treasurer's and Secretary's reports were read—the former showing a balance on the right side, and also an increase in the Sunday collections The officers for the year were elected, and the Sunday School report given, which told of an increase both in numbers and in average attendance. A short musical programme was then given by the choir and by Miss Nanny Crawford, Miss Buchanan, Miss Sophia Robinson (recitation), Mr. James M'Clelland, and Mr. James Maxwell, after which the evening was devoted to dancing, various games and competitions, and stereoscopic views. During the evening the company were invited to look at a peculiar animal, which Mr. Thompson claimed as his own property, though he expressly stated that he had not caught it himself. One of the company likened it to a rhinoceros, another to a crab, whilst a third observed that it was like an elephant, in having a very big trunk, but the whole creature was so small that it could only be viewed to full advantage by aid of the microscope. At 12-30, after singing Auld Lang Syne and "God Save the King," the party reluctantly broke up.

On the following evening the Rev. Eustace and Mrs. Thompson gave a party to the children of the congregation, which, as usual, was thoroughly enjoyed. There was a good muster of children at 4 o'clock, who played all kinds of games with great spirit till 5-30, when tea was served, the elder boys acting as stewards. After more games, including a quadruped race for boys and a crab race for girls, and skipping competitions, two little cousins from away up the hills danced an Irish reel very nicely, and a little brother and sister danced prettily a Highland Schottische. After a distribution of toys, sweets and crackers, the party broke up at about 8-15.

* *

Comber.—The Sunday School held its usual New Year's treat on 14th January. The principal part of the entertainment consisted of a Peter-Pan House, built in the school-room for the occasion, down the chimneys of which Father Christmas poured his gifts to all the scholars. After tea, prizes for attendance were distributed by Mrs. Dunbar. A few songs, recitations, and a little dancing, with games, brought a very successful evening to a close. As this was the first congregational meeting in which our new minister took part, we trust it augurs well for the future.

* *

Mountpottinger.—The Sunday School Party and Xmas Tree was held in the School-room on Friday evening, 28th January. Promptly at the appointed hour—6 o'clock—there assembled a fine muster of eager, jubilant scholars, ready for feasting and merrymaking. An excellent tea, generously provided by Miss Davidson, was a fitting prelude to the evening's programme ; and in the various items the programme unfolded, the audience displayed a lively and appreciative interest. If dialogues only lent themselves, as do musical items, to encores, the three given would have been repeatedly encored, as were the songs, especially those of little Miss Betty Newman. The book prizes were presented by Mr. Edgar R. Jackson, and his words of encouragement to the scholars will, we trust, bear fruit in improved attendance and increased prize-winners for next year. This brought the proceedings to the event of the evening—the visit of Santa Claus in flowing red robe and long white beard. His hearty heralding hello of greeting made old and young excitedly merry, and expectations were on tip-toe when he began his work of distributing the toys and presents weighting the branches of the splendid Xmas Tree given by Mr. J. Johnson. It was a time of playful banter and humorous quips—all too soon ended. A vote of thanks to one and all who had contributed to the evening's delight brought to a close the Annual Party—that never fails to be the pride and joy of our Sunday School scholars.

On Sunday, January 30th, special collections were made on behalf of the British Red Cross Society, the sum realized being a little over £5.

* *

The Sunday School Committee.—ESSAY COMPETITION—The adjudicators appointed by the Committee award first place to "Miriam" and second place to "Strand" and "Dorcas." Will these three kindly send in their names to Rev. S. E. Bowen, The Manse, Crumlin.

The Bishop of London recently said England would have been a pariah among the nations if she had not joined in the war. He agreed with a Quaker friend who wrote to him on the brotherhood of nations, but upon one condition—that they could trust another nation's word. Until a nation's word was its bond, until a treaty was a treaty and not a scrap of paper, there could be no such brotherhood at all. We must beware of an inconclusive peace, as we could not allow this to be fought all over again by our children, and all those who had died to have died in vain.

"Life's but a means unto an end ; that end,
Beginning, mean, and end to all things —God."

"Desire not to live long, but to live well ;
How long we live, not years, but actions, tell."

Names and Addresses of Ministers and Secretaries.

PRESBYTERY OF ANTRIM.

Rev. M. S. Dunbar, Moderator. Rev James Kennedy, Clerk

Congregation.	Minister's Name and Address.	Secretary's Name and Address.
Larne ..	James Kennedy, The Manse, Larne.	Samuel Magill, Cross Street, Larne.
York Street, Belfast.	Vacant.	David Ervine. 26 Grampian Ave., Belfast.
———	Alex. O. Ashworth, Marsdene, Cyprus Park, Bloomfield, Belfast.	———
Downpatrick ..	Vacant.	Hugh Dickson, Saul Street, Downpatrick.
Newtownards	Robert Maxwell King, Hollymount, Newtownards, Co. Down.	S. Harrison, Regent Street, Newtownards, Co. Down.
———	S. H. Mellone, M.A., DSC. Summerville, Victoria Park, Manchester.	———
First Belfast ..	H. J. Rossington, M.A., B.D Ardeevin, Cadogan Park Belfast.	E. Gordon, 35 Rosemary St., Belfast.
Holywood ..	G. L. Phelps, Beechcroft, Holywood.	James Shannon, jun., Holywood.
Ballyclare ..	Percival Godding, The Old Manse, Ballyclare.	Sam Bingham, Ballyclare, Co. Antrim.
Second Belfast (All Souls)	E. H. Pickering, B.A. Airlie, Marlborough Park South Belfast.	Adam Millin, Auburn, Deramore Drive, Belfast.
Clough ..	J. D. Davies, Dundrum, Co. Down.	J. H. M'Cammon, Nutgrove, Clough, Co. Down.
Antrim ..	G. V. Crook, The Manse, Greystone, Antrim.	J. S. Hunter, J.P. Lake View, British Crumlin, Co. Antrim.
Carricktergus	Supplies.	William Larmour, Joymount, Carrickfergus.
Greyabbey ..	W. H. T. Tilson, M.A. The Manse, Greyabbey, Co. Down. M. S. Dunbar, The Manse, Comber.	Charles H. Carson, Ballynester, Greyabbey, Co. Down.

TEMPLEPATRICK PRESBYTERY.

Rev. J. M'Cleery, Moderator. Rev. E. Thompson Clerk.

Templepatrick	Alfred Turner, The Manse, Templepatrick, Co. Antrim.	John B. Moore, Clady, Templepatrick.
Glenarm ..	Jos. A. Miskimmin, B.A. The Manse, Glenarm, Co. Antrim.	John Robinson, Altmore Street, Glenarm.
Ballycarry ..	W. G. Marsden, The Manse, Ballycarry, Co. Antrim.	W. M'Giffin, Scoutbush, Ballycarry.
Raloo ..	John M'Cleery, The Manse, Raloo, Larne, Co. Antrim.	John Moore, Gleno, Raloo, Larne.
Cairncastle ..	Eustace Thompson, The Manse, Cairncastle, Co. Antrim.	R. Snoddy, Cairncastle.
Crumlin ..	Samuel Evans Bowen, The Manse, Crumlin, Co. Antrim.	John Hamilton, Gartree Cottage, Crumlin.
Ballymoney ..	Felix Holt, B.A., Eastburn, Ballymoney.	J. W. Pinkerton, High Street, Ballymoney.

BANGOR PRESBYTERY.

Rev. Alfred Davison, Moderator. Rev. J. A. Kelly, Clerk.

Congregation	Minister's Name and Address	Secretary's Name And Address.
Comber ..	Senior Minister: Thos. Dunkerley, B.A., 80 Great George's Street, Glasgow; Assistant and Successor: Kenneth Dunbar, M.A., The Manse, Comber.	John M. Orr, Ballystockart, Dundonald, Co. Down.
Dunmurry ..	J. A. Kelly, The Glebe, Dunmurry, Co. Antrim.	R. E. M. Scott, 4 India Street, Belfast.
Ballee ..	Jos. Henry Bibby, Ballee Manse, Downpatrick, Co. Down	R. Caven, Ballybranagh, Dwnpatrick, Co. Down.
———	Alex. Gordon, M.A., 35 Rosemary Street, Belfast.	———
Rademon ..	John J. Magill, B.A., Rademon Manse, Crossgar, Co. Down.	William Morrison, Crossgar Post Office, Co. Down.
Moira ..	William Weatherall, Ladybridge, Moira, Co. Down.	Andrew Wilson, Clare Hill, Moira, Co. Down.
Killinchy ..	David J. Williams, The Manse, Killinchy, Co. Down.	R. F. Shaw, Railway Street, Comber—Co. Down
Mountpottinger	Matthew Watkins, 4 Bathgate Drive, Belfast.	R. J. Munn, M.D., Ingleside, Woodstock Road, Belfast.
Moneyrea ..	Vacant.	S. M'K. Turkington, Moneyrea, Comber, Co. Down.
Ballyhemlin	John Barron, Ballyhemlin Manse, Ballywalter, Co. Down.	J. R. Rankin, J.P., Rocklands, Kircubbin, Co. Down.
Dromore ..	Alfred Davison, The Manse, Dromore, Co. Down.	W. J. Baxter, B.A., Clanmurray, Dromore Co. Down.
Newry ..	George J. Slipper, The Manse, Newry, Co. Down.	R. J. M'Combe, Riverside, Newry, Co. Down.
Banbridge ..	J. G. Davies, The Manse, Banbridge.	S. Bell, Ballydown, Banbridge.
Warrenpoint	———	Rev. S. H. Mellone, M.A. D.SC., Dunedin, Victoria Park, Manchester.

SYNOD OF MUNSTER.

Rev. W. A. Weatherall, Moderator. G. Hamilton, Vance, B D., [Clerk.

Dublin ..	E. Savell Hicks, M.A., St. Kevin's Park, Rathmines, Dublin.	C. G. Herbert, 80 Leinster Road, Dublin.
———	G. Hamilton Vance, B.D. 12 North Hill, Highgate, London, N.	———
Clonmel ..	Supplies.	Miss E. J. Orr, Airmount, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary.
Cork ..	Rev. W. A. Weatherall, Glasheen Road, Cork.	Gerald Percival, George Street, Cork.

DEATHS.

HUNTER—At Ballymoney Infirmary Hospital, on Thursday, 17th Feb., 1916, Nancy Hunter, of Union Street, Ballymoney, aged 87 years, daughter of the late James Hunter, Ballywattick. Buried in the Old Churchyard, on Saturday, 19th ult.

M'WHIRR—At Ballyhalbert, Co. Down, on February 15th, 1916, David M'Whirr, aged 67 years. Interred at Ballyhalbert.

RITCHIE—At the School-house, Ballyhalbert, Co. Down, on Sunday, February 13th, 1916, John Colville Ritchie, aged 22 years. Interred at Glastry.

MONTGOMERY—At his residence, Drumaghlis, Rademon, on February 7th, 1916, John Montgomery, sen., in the ninety-third year of his age. Deceased was the oldest member of Rademon Congregation.

Build a little fence of trust
Around to-day;
Fill the space with loving work,
And therein stay;
Look not through the sheltering bars
Upon to-morrow,
God will help thee bear what comes,
Of joy or sorrow.

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